Scrutiny of Defence deals by a group of eminent persons

2235. SHRI MOOL CHAND MEENA:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Defence has decided to set up an eminent persons' group to scrutinize defence deals; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Scrutiny of major procurement cases by an "eminent persons group", is being considered. No final decision has, however, been taken in this regard.

Fate of missing MIG aircraft

2236. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a MIG aircraft with its two pilots went missing on 25th April, 2002; and

(b) if so, what has been the fate of this aircraft and its pilots?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. A MiG-21 trainer aircraft, with two pilots is missing since 20th April, 2002.

(b) Efforts to locate the crash site and missing pilots are continuing. However, it is presumed that both the pilots have been killed in the crash.

Supply of modernised radars to India by the USA

2237. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India made a request to the U.S.A. to supply 8 modernized radars in April this year; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the U.S. Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The US Government has agreed to sell the radars.

Development of Shakti Engine ALH

2238. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Turbomeca, France based snecma group company have undertaken a joint venture to develop "Shakti" a more powerful engine for India's Advanced Light Helicopter; and

(b) if so, the details of the project?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) To meet the requirements of Army & Air Force, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is considering fitment of a more powerful engine for the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH). It has been decided to jointly develop a higher-powered engine, named, 'Shakti' with Turbomeca, part of M/s. Snecma Group, France. Detailed discussions have been held and the technical specifications of the engine have been finalised. The draft proposal has been received from M/s. Turbomeca covering, *inter-alia*, co-development and co-production of Shakti engines.

Mandatory approval of CCS for defence purchases

2239. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence has recommended that "no procurement can be made without the approval of the Cabinet Committee on Security";

(b) if so, whether Government have received the recommendations of the Committee in this regard;

(c) if so, to what extent Government have agreed to implement the suggestions; and